



State of Connecticut

African-American Affairs Commission

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509

Hartford, CT 06106

860-240-8555

Dear Senator Gerratna, Representative Ritter, Senator Crisco, Representative Riley, Senator Markley and Representative Srinivasan and other distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Subira Gordon and I am the legislative analyst for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut.

I am writing to provide testimony in support of SB 5894 AAC increasing the availability of licensed medical interpreters for limited English proficiency patients and S.B 856 AAC language interpreters in hospitals. For too many individuals in the state and across the country the thought of going to a hospital is nerve wrecking due to their limited proficiency in English. The commission believes that each patient should be provided with a medical interpreter because access to health care in the country is a right and not a privilege. Many times family members end up serving as interpreters and this is problematic as they are not trained as medical interpreters and an individual may not receive the proper care that they need or errors can be made that could be fatal.

Connecticut is becoming more diverse every year so it is increasingly more important to provide medical interpreters to individuals who may need these services.

I would like to thank you for your time today.